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The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian

No. 293. FEBRUARY, 1931.

TRUTH—LIBERTY—RELIGION.

"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."—Romans xii.: 18.

CONTENTS;

Editorial Notes	Front Page	Obituary	17
Visit of Unitarian Woman Minister ...	15	Women's League	18
Evangelical Psychology, by Ullin	15	Reports	18
Children's Page, by N.E.	16	Sustentation Fund	21
Rev. Richard J. Hall, M.A., by Rev. R. N. Cross	17	York Street Congregation, by The Moderator ...	21

EDITORIAL NOTES.

With the March issue of the Magazine a change of Editor is promised. The present Editor only took the position until a new one was appointed, and we are glad to announce that the Rev. John Barron has consented to act. Under his guidance we hope the Magazine will prosper. We thank him for his many contributions, which have been most interesting and instructive.

* * *

It will now be necessary for correspondents to send in their articles and reports not later than the 18th of each month to ensure insertion. Mr. Barron's address is: Ballyhemlin Manse, Ballywalter, Co. Down.

* * *

The death of the Princess Royal evoked widespread regret, and among the many messages of sympathy with his Majesty the King, and the members of the Royal family, was the following sent by the Moderator to His Majesty:

Deepest sympathy in His Majesty's bereavement. — From Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, Ireland.

BARRON, Moderator.

* * *

The following reply was received:—

The Moderator, Ballywalter.

I am commanded by the King to convey to you and to the members of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church Ireland, an expression of His Majesty's grateful thanks for the kind message of sympathy in his sad bereavement.—Private Secretary.

* * *

We deeply regret to learn of the death of Rev. Richard Hall, M.A., of Swansea, one of the active ministers of our Church, whose early life was spent in the city of Belfast. An appreciation by Rev. R. Nicol Cross, M.A., appears in this issue.

* * *

GROWING OLD.

A little more tired at close of day,
A little less anxious to have our way,
A little less ready to scold and blame,
A little more care for a brother's name.
And so we are nearing the journey's end,
Where Time and Eternity meet and blend

A little less care for bonds and gold,
A little more zest in the days of old,
A broader view and a saner mind,
A little more love for all mankind.
And so we are faring adown the way
That leads to the gates of a better day.

A little more love for the friends of youth,
A little less zeal for established truth,
A little more charity in our views,
A little less thirst for the daily news.
And so we are folding our tents away,
And passing in silence at close of day.

A little more laughter, a few more tears,
And we shall have told our increasing years.
The book is closed, and the prayers are said,
And we are a part of the countless dead.
Thrice happy if then some soul can say,
I live because he has passed my way.

Rollin J. Wells.

VISIT OF UNITARIAN WOMAN MINISTER.

The Rev. E. Rosalind Lee, M.A., of London, visited Belfast in January at the invitation of the Ulster District Branch of the British League of Unitarian and other Liberal Christian Women.

Miss Lee (who was educated at Newnham College, Cambridge), has held pastorates at Pentre, Glamorganshire; Melbourne, Australia; and Leicester; is now Honorary Secretary of the British League of Unitarian Women, and is taking charge of the New Gravel Pit Church at Hackney, London, for the winter months. For two years Miss Lee was Chairman of the Overseas and Foreign Committee of the General Assembly, and it was during this period that she visited the Unitarian Churches of Budapesth and Transylvania, which have existed since the year 1568. They are now organised under Bishop Boros and two Lay Presidents. There are 162 congregations in Transylvania with a membership of 80,000, and the oldest congregation is at Cluj-Kolozsvar.

Miss Lee was also one of the five delegates to a small international gathering in Holland in July last year in preparation for the great International Congress, which will be held in 1932, probably in Switzerland.

Rev. Rosalind Lee took a service at First Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street, and addressed meetings at the Central Hall and Rosemary Hall.

On Thursday, January 22nd, the quarterly meeting of the Ulster District Women's League was held. A service was conducted by the Rev. R. Lee, M.A., in First Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street, and later Miss Lee addressed a large gathering of representatives from the fourteen branches, speaking of the position and work of women in the Churches throughout the age of Christianity. Curiously, the speaker remarked, that although women had greater power politically now, her position in the Church had altered very little, and she quoted instances of immense power in the hands of women of the Church in the past. Miss Lee also deplored the lack of organised social work in our Unitarian Church. While many helped, and indeed took prominent positions in the civic social welfare, organised work definitely under Unitarian control was almost unknown, and paid women social workers, such as exist in almost all the other denominations, were unknown. Miss Lee pointed out many ways in which the women of to-day could make their influence felt in the Church, and spoke very strongly against ballots as methods of raising money.

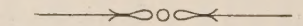
A vote of thanks was proposed by Mrs. Shaw Brown, of Clough, and seconded by Mrs. Slipper, of Newry.

Mrs. Slipper played the organ for the service, and Miss Eileen Ervine rendered a solo with effect.

At the evening meeting the Rev. R. Nicol Cross, M.A., took the chair, and Miss Lee thrilled her hearers with vivid word pictures of the life of a conquered nation and of the work and progress of the Unitarian Church in Transylvania.

A vote of thanks was proposed by Mrs. Glynne Davies, of Comber, and seconded by Mrs. J. H. Ewbank, of Mountpottinger.

The All-Souls' Branch of the Women's League entertained the District League on Friday afternoon in the Rosemary Hall, when Mrs. Barbara Henderson and Miss Eileen Millar entertained the company.



There is a prison at Gualph, Ontario, Canada, without any walls or barred windows; where no guard carries a gun or club; where any prisoner, if he feels like it, can escape at any time. It contains among its 700 inmates some of Canada's most dangerous criminals—a hundred lifers—yet it has never had a riot, nor even a near-riot, and has an average of less than two escapes a year. The escapes have not yet included a lifer. The prison comprises about 1,000 acres of farming and orchard land. There is also a woollen mill, a cannery, a wood-working factory, a bed factory, and a quarry. The prisoners are paid for their work as any other labourers, except that the money is either sent to their families or is held for them until their release.

EVANGELICAL PSYCHOLOGY.

(By Ullin).

A young Church of England clergyman in a Presbyterian Church in Belfast, carrying on a revival mission, was something rather new! Very handsome, boyish, with good address, very confident, he knew his work. Before the service began he led the congregation in community singing. He stood down in front of the pulpit and gave out a hymn. "Now this is one of my favourites, but I never heard it before to the tune you sang last night. I liked that tune immensely. Will you sing it now? I am sure not half of you are singing. I'll just walk down this transept and see who is singing and who isn't." Then they all got to singing. Personally I don't like the hymn because of the line "Except Thy Blood was shed for me." So I didn't sing. Then he would say: "Now, the third verse. I want you to sink your minds into it—put meaning into every word. Now all of you sing. Oh! here's a hymn. It was a favourite of my mother's." She was a dear old mother. She couldn't sing a bit, but she didn't think so; but don't you ever tell her I said so. Anyway, she knew how to bring up a family that has been a credit to her. When she was 58 she went out as a missionary to Burmah, and no doubt she is trying to make them sing this same old hymn. Upstairs and downstairs you could hear her singing, and the tune was entirely her own invention, and on Sundays in Church she would sing out loud, just in her own way, and she made the family feel very much ashamed. Now, then, all of you sing it. Put meaning into every word!"

Then the preacher went to the pulpit, where a number of requests for prayer were piled on the ledge. These he classified into various petitions. At the close of each petition the congregation responded "Lord, hear our prayer."

"Now," said he, "there may be medical students here, and some others who know about philosophy. They will understand what is meant by Psycho-Theraphy." That is, healing through the mind. Those who practice that are "psycho-analysts." They get down to some thought that is the root of the trouble, even of bodily disease. Such a thought is called a "complex." One bad complex is fear. When Jonah got away in the ship he was down below, and a hurricane came on, and the ship tossed about all sorts of ways, and the sailors cried to the gods of the winds and waves, and they thought there must be someone on board who had incurred the wrath of those gods, and so lots were cast, and the lot fell upon Jonah. There was Jonah, himself the very embodiment of a complex: fear and cowardice, and the sailors got him up and threw him overboard, and then there was a calm. Don't be introspective. God will find out your complex for you, and bring it right up in front of your mind. It may be fear, hate, impurity, falsehood, or pride. As soon as it is brought up, throw it overboard. A big fat boy in a parish where the preacher was once a curate, met him one day, and said he listened to the sermon on Jonah, and was going to give up fried fish and chipped potatoes. The preacher didn't know quite what to say, and remarked that Abraham forsook all, but neither the curate himself or the boy seemed impressed. Later on he told his vicar, who knew the boy to be a fine, healthy, growing lad, but very greedy for food. Then the curate saw what the boy was driving at. "Greed" was his complex, and if the boy had prayed "O Lord, deliver me from greediness," he might still have gone on eating as he had been doing; but he got from the abstract to the concrete. People make pets of dogs and cats and parrots, and some even of lions and reptiles, and some even make pets of sins. Have you got a pet sin? That is your complex. Get rid of it! Now up to this point, on the whole, the talk was very good sense; but suddenly bursts in the old orthodoxy—the vicarious atonement, God Himself becoming incarnate and dying on Calvary to save us from the punishment of our sins. A booklet was handed to people as they passed out, with the question on it "How can I be saved from the punishment of my sins hereafter and from the power of sin in my life now?" "Because I am a

sinner I am under God's wrath, and in danger of banishment from His presence for ever." Did Christ come to save from the consequences of sin, from sin itself. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." The natural consequences must follow, but new causes can be set going to-day which may alleviate and even restore health to body and soul, as medicine does and rest and change. Christ came to save us from sin. This means "missing the mark." Christ came to save us from missing the mark, from living in the world and yet missing the true meaning of life, from just living the life of a machine, which isn't life at all, but death." "I am come that ye might have life and have it more abundantly." Surely we have a fervent Liberal Evangelicalism, which has not the terror of endless torment in the background, which is none other than the pure enlightened Gospel of the Living Christ Himself, for Liberal Religion wherever found, means "informed" religion.

FOR THE CHILDREN.

Now all the joys and excitements of Christmas are things of the past. We have put all our Christmas cards away, we have pulled down the holly and mistletoe from our walls and pictures, and we now look forward to the next events of importance. Already we see in the shops quite a number of Spring flowers, and people are searching in their gardens for signs of bulbs, and wondering when the snowdrops and crocuses will be brave enough to thrust their heads through the hard cold soil. We all welcome the return of the bulbs, their flowers are so fresh and full of promise after the dark days during which our gardens have been bare of flowers. During the Christmas holidays I read about a bride carrying a bouquet of narcissi on her wedding day. I think those flowers must have been grown somewhere warmer than in our gardens in Ireland.

I wonder if you have ever heard how the narcissus is supposed to have got its name? I think most of you will be familiar with this beautiful flower with its waxen-like petals and fragrant scent. If you are not, you must look out for the return of the bulbs, and ask someone to point out to you the narcissus.

Once upon a time there was a beautiful Prince whose name was Narcissus. He lived before looking glasses had been invented, so he had never seen his own face. The people at his father's palace were constantly telling the prince how handsome he was; consequently he became very vain. His mother was anxious to know whether her son would always keep his beauty, so she asked the gods. They replied: "Yes, his beauty will endure until he sees himself." One day when Narcissus was walking alone through the woods he came to a clear pond. In this pond he saw the reflection of someone very beautiful to look upon. He stopped, enchanted by this lovely sight. He could not tear himself away from the place, but stood gazing and gazing. He wanted to get nearer to the image, so he lay down and looked still more eagerly at the reflection. He stretched out his arms to grasp the image and the image stretched out its arms in return, but still Narcissus could not reach the beloved object. "Who art thou whom the gods have made so fair?" cried the Prince. The lips of the image also moved, but still no answer came. After a time the Prince became very angry and cried out: "Why dost thou despise me? I am one whom all account beautiful." But still no answer to his ardent appeal. The courtiers from the Palace were sent out in search of the Prince, and they begged him to go home with them, but no persuasions could make him forsake the spot where he had seen his beloved object. He was so engrossed with his quest that he would not allow food to pass his lips. There he lay day after day until at length he drooped and pined away. The gods were sad and sorrowful at the death of one so young and beautiful, so in order that he should not be forgotten they caused fragrant flowers to grow round about the spot where the Prince had died, and they named these beautiful flowers after the handsome Prince, "Narcissus."

N. E.

OBITUARY.

—:o:—

THE REV. RICHARD J. HALL, M.A.

An Appreciation by the Rev. R. Nicol Cross.

In "The Inquirer" of January 3rd appeared the announcement of the passing away of the Rev. Richard J. Hall, Minister of the Unitarian Church, at Swansea, in South Wales, and with it an able and sympathetic summary of his career. The whole of his ministry was spent in England and the Colonies, and his later preparation for it was obtained at Oxford: but he was reared in Belfast, belonged to the North of Ireland, and these gave to his personality characteristics which it never lost, and which were a great gain to the denomination of which he was a loyal and faithful servant.

The present writer first met him as a student at Manchester College, Oxford, and had many a walk with him along the meadows of that loveliest and most enchanting of English cities. Oxford has been called "the home of lost causes" by Matthew Arnold, and Unitarianism has sometimes been described as a losing cause, but amid those scenes where linger still "the last enchantments of the mediaeval world," Richard Hall never lost the cause that first brought him thither, nor his faith in a religion whose business was to exalt deeds above creeds in the estimation of men. "This is the victory which overcometh the world, even your faith."

Another of the reminiscences that comes from the old Oxford days is that of a little band of students from the College, including men of remarkable intellectual gifts and - out - and - out modernists, holding open-air meetings on Sunday evenings in one of the poorer vicinities of the city. They were there not because they believed much would be accomplished, but to support R. J. Hall in preaching his Gospel. The religion he proclaimed was very simple but very essential, that of "being good and doing good." One can almost hear the accents of his voice again as he repeated the injunction, for he was not afraid to repeat himself. "Speak the kind word and do the upright deed." That was the refrain and burden of his message.

There were very few who deigned to loiter and listen, but Hall did not seem to mind that. He must have his opportunity of preaching and declaring what was in his soul. That was to be his life work; he never lost sight of it, and Oxford was just a stage on the way. The interests of the student and scholar were, I think, less his in those days than later on in South Africa, and the typical social life of the University made little appeal to him. Straitened financial resources also, no doubt, removed any temptation that way.

Zeal for the Ministry burned in him and he had the gift of speech and the ready tongue of the Irishman. He could trust with an easy mind to inspiration more than to perspiration in sermon preparation, and an unfailing earnestness of spirit and conviction carried the utterance forward.

Earnestness and zeal were outstanding and perennial qualities of the man, and he brought them to the service of all the causes he espoused. The coldness, correctness and decorum, which make up a deal of the stock-in-trade of religious respectability, he cared nothing for. His temperament was warmed with apostolic fervour, and he retained it all through his varied experience, and whatever the difficulties and depressions of the work. In him the First Church, Belfast, gave to the cause of Liberal Religion and Humanity a live force, and our ministry and denomination are the poorer for his loss. But he leaves behind the example and memory of a good soldier of Jesus Christ, one who fought and wrought for noble causes, and kept the faith to the end.

Mr. Herbert C. Scott.

By the death of Mr. Herbert C. Scott, Town Clerk and Town Solicitor, Ballyclare, the Old Presbyterian Church, has experienced a sad loss. Only 45 years of age, he had crowded into his short life much valuable service. He had enjoyed perfect health until about a month ago, when he was laid aside by a rather sudden and serious illness. Such was his recovery, however, that within a few

weeks he was feeling sufficiently well to be about his business as usual, when a second sudden attack came on, and he passed away some hours later at his home on Thursday, January 15th. Mr. Scott was most popular and universally esteemed. A member of our Church Committee and an enthusiastic worker, kindly, courteous and considerate for others, his place will be very difficult to fill. But great as is our loss, infinitely greater is the loss sustained by his widow, to whom, as well as to the other relatives, our deepest sympathy is extended. The funeral, which was Masonic and very large and representative, took place to the New Cemetery, Ballyclare, on Sunday afternoon, Jan. 18th. The service in the house was conducted by the Rev. A. M. Bell, B.A., while at the graveside the Revs. Alfred Turner, Wm. Brown, B.A., LL.B., and A. M. Bell officiated.

REPORTS.

WOMEN'S LEAGUE.

Mountpottinger. — On Wednesday, January 14th, our members of the Women's League were favoured with a most interesting talk by Mrs. Gardiner, of Holywood. We all felt that we were traversing the wonderful places to which Mrs. Gardiner so successfully guided our imagination during her very eloquent description of the ground she had covered when visiting Jerusalem and Rhodesia. Beautiful references were made to the burial place of our Lord. The method of working the farms in Rhodesia, as described by our lecturer, was both instructive and humorous. Mrs. Ewbank presided, and expressed the appreciation of all members to Mrs. Gardiner for her kindness in coming to Mountpottinger and giving us such an enjoyable evening.

Ballycarry Branch Women's League. —On Friday evening, 21st November, 1930, the members of the Women's League gave an Evening Party. Friends from the surrounding district and some members from Larne Branch came through most inclement weather, and about seventy took part in games and thoroughly enjoyed themselves. At intervals during the evening various items, which added much to the success of the party, were given and much appreciated. A Dutch dance by Miss Hampshire, with music on the piano by Mrs. Anderson; items on the mouth organ by Master John M'Kinstry; violin and pianoforte duets by the Misses M'Callion. A sketch entitled "The Lady Magistrate" was given by the Misses Connor, Campbell, M'Kee, B. M'Kee, and E. M'Master; recitations by Miss Hampshire and a Fancy Dress Parade by Mrs. M'Kee, Miss Anderson and Miss M. M'Kee. Our best thanks are due to those who came to the party, and to those who sent subscriptions. The nominal charge of one shilling each for teas was charged, and £6 was added to our Organ Fund.

Crumlin. — The Old Presbyterian Church held a Children's Christmas Tree Party in the Schoolroom on Monday, 22nd December. Out of thirty invited, twenty-two turned up and had a jolly evening. Each child had, as well as a handsome tea, fruit, sweets, and a present from the tree. Of course, as this is only the first party within living memory we have something to learn, and we expect Father Christmas himself will give out the presents next year. Gifts of Bibles in attractive editions (Cambridge Children's, Cassell's "Story," and World's Classics) were made to the Sabbath scholars. Games more boisterous than skilful were played for hours, and after the youngsters departed, the grown-ups kept things lively until a late hour. Everyone voted it a great time, and all have made up their minds to be there again next year. So the helpers are well pleased.

Ballyhemlin.

On Sunday, December 28th, the school prizes were distributed by Mr. F. M. Allen. A request this year had been made for Testaments. A stock of these nicely bound were provided for choir and school, besides a variety of suitable books for others. The little magazine, "Fairyland Tales," which is published weekly, is obtained and copies from week to week are gathered togegether for distribution about once a month or six weeks, as the case may be.

Glenarm.—On Sunday, 4th January, the Minister distributed book prizes to 29 Sunday school scholars in attendance at the above school during the past year. Out of a possible attendance of 50, Evelyn Robinson and Anna Robinson obtained full marks. Margaret Robinson, Annie Robinson and Samuel Robinson had 48 marks, and Margaret Robinson, sen., 47 marks. For superior answering in Christian Catechism, Anna Robinson, Margaret Robinson, and Evelyn Robinson, all of Altmore Street, were placed first, second and third in order of merit. We appeal to parents who have not already done so, to send their children regularly and punctually to Sunday school, and see that they learn the lessons appointed by their teachers.

Killinchy.—A dramatic performance of Rutherford Mayne's popular comedy in three acts, "The Drone," was given in the Lecture Hall by the Killinchy Unitarian Players on Friday and Saturday, January 2nd and 3rd, when appreciative and enthusiastic audiences attended on both nights, filling the Hall to its utmost capacity. Such popular comedies as "The Drone" and "Professor Tim" draw large audiences whenever they are represented by our local players. The version of "The Drone" given on the 2nd and 3rd was no exception. The action taking place throughout the three acts in the kitchen of farmer John Murray, in the County of Down, appeals with irresistible force to a country audience. The comedy is a piece that gives an opportunity to the nine characters to represent their parts with a verisimilitude that ensures its success with a popular audience, and thus all the parts, without distinction, were worthy of their place. We were fortunate in having Miss Chambers and Mr. Hamilton Morrow to dispense musical items during the evening, to both of whom we render grateful thanks.

Belfast Domestic Mission. — It will interest members and supporters of the Mission to learn that Miss Jane E. Bruce entered on her 100th year on Sunday, January 18th. On that date in 1832, a daughter was born to the late Rev. W. and Mrs. Bruce at a house in Donegall Square, where the family then resided. Two years later they moved to "The Farm," built by the Rev. W. Bruce, and there Miss Jane Bruce has lived ever since. She and her sister were associated with many of the philanthropic and charitable societies working in Belfast, and even yet Miss Bruce still retains her interest in all good works, and especially in the Domestic Mission in Stanhope Street.

Banbridge. — Our annual party and prize distribution was held on New Year's Day, and was one of the best we ever had, and one of the largest attended. We had a very good tea, as usual, and, also as usual, dispensed by the ladies. Musical games were indulged in before and after this tea, to the evident enjoyment of those who felt themselves too old for such excessive energy and frivolity, as well, of course, of those who did take part. In a short address of thanks to teachers in the Sunday school, and appreciation of the regular attendances made by the scholars during the past year, the Minister was able to state that the attendance of more than usual, excelled. There was an exceptionally high attendance made by many. Mrs. S. Bell very kindly accepted the invitation to hand out the prizes, which she did very graciously. The vote of thanks by acclamation afforded her was undoubtedly an appreciation also of her well-known activity and zeal for her Church. Miss Nan and Miss Eva Gallagher, together with Master Robert Lyons had full attendances during the year, and Miss Sadie Matchett, Master Tommy Lyons, and Master Ted M'Keown failed to attend on only one Sunday. Four only missed three Sundays, three of whom were members of the Minister's class (over 16 years of age). Ten League of Loyalty prizes were also given to those who attended regularly at the Sunday services. No prizes were awarded for the L.O.L. last year, which accounts for the number of awards this time (last year's attendances being considered). Then came a visit from Father Christmas, wonderfully personated by Mr. Victor Bryans; indeed so realistic was his happy ——? that some of the little ones thought he must have been the real Father Christmas. He distributed a hundred gifts

among both children and adults present. Then we discovered with a shock that the time was moving to eleven, and it seemed all too soon to close such a jolly gathering. But it had to be, and God Save the King was sung and the Minister pronounced the Benediction.

Holywood. — The annual Sunday School Service was held on Friday, Jan. 9th. Over 60 children sat down to tea at 7 o'clock, and an hour later, when the Schoolroom was crowded by the addition of parents and friends of the school, an entertainment was given by the scholars. Twelve children trained by Mrs. F. A. Robinson, gave a sketch, "Dick Whittington," in which they acquitted themselves to the credit of their teacher and themselves. Miss Peggy Shannon sang songs, and Hugh Shannon, John Davidson, George Quee and William Wilson (pupils of Mr. W. J. Harvey) sang two quartettes. Two other sketches were performed, one called "Hey Diddle Diddle," by girls trained by Miss Ena Meneely, and the other a burlesque under Mr. Harvey's direction, in which the actors were Hugh Shannon and George Quee. During the programme the prizes won by the scholars in the year's work were distributed by Miss M'Kisack, a grand-daughter of a former honoured minister of the congregation, who kindly took the place of Miss Lilla M. Patterson, who was prevented from attending by illness. Thirty-five awards were given and fourteen of the scholars had attended every time the school was opened. The Rev. Edgar Lockett, who presided, warmly thanked the teachers for their loyal work, and votes of thanks were also accorded to Miss M'Kisack, Mrs. Robinson, Mr. Harvey, Lady Kennedy (for the gift of the Christmas Tree), and to all the workers who had contributed to the evening's enjoyment. The stripping of the Christmas Tree was the crowning event of the night for the kiddies. Father Christmas (Mr. D. Lockett) added a realistic touch to this proceeding.

The members of the Sewing Circle were the guests of their President (Mrs. William Patterson) at Kilmore, on Wednesday afternoon, Jan. 14th. A pleasant time was spent at whist, the first prize going to Mrs. Robert Steele, and "the booby" to Mrs. Hugh Shannon, jun. Mrs. Patterson's kind hospitality was greatly appreciated.

Moneyrea. — The Xmas Party was held in the Lyttle Memorial School on Saturday evening, December 20th, at which there was an unusually large attendance. The ladies of the congregation made the tea and presided at the tables. The children were entertained at 6 o'clock, and their parents and adults at 7. When tea was over, the Rev. J. D. Davies was voted to the chair and the programme of the evening opened with a chorus, "Marching Through Georgia," by the scholars, which was followed by "Xmas Day in the Morning"; recitation, "The Little Housekeeper" by Jessie Hughes; chorus, "Nursery Rhymes" by the infants; "Flower Song" by the senior girls; duet, "Where Are You Going To?" by Meta M'Kibben and Wm. Smyth; sketch, "The Deaf Grandma," by four scholars; chorus "The Emperor Napoleon" by the Seniors; Irish jig by Jean Dunn; chorus, "Caller Herrin'" by the senior girls; song, "The Tin Gee-Gee" by Nessie M'Briar; solo and chorus, "Danny Boy," Molly M'Connell and others; chorus, "The First Nowell" by the scholars. The programme ended with a comedy entitled "Turncoats" (Lynn Doyle), which was excellently performed by four members of our Dramatic Society. The characters were—Simon Savage (Mr. Sam Maxwell); Matthew Savage, his son (Mr. James Maxwell); Mrs. Ross, widow (Miss M. Bryce); Minnie Ross, her daughter (Miss B. Kennedy). Great credit is due to Mr. Millen and his staff for the way they trained the children and the excellent programme they provided. Mr. Hugh Frame, after referring to the importance of the Sunday school, kindly distributed the prizes. One scholar (James Blair) was presented with a handsome medal, suitably inscribed, for his five years' unbroken attendance. After a vote of thanks was passed to Mr. Frame, Mr. Millen, Miss M'Clune, Miss Patton and the tea-makers, a most successful Xmas party closed with National Anthem.

THE SUSTENTATION FUND.

Sir,—Some time ago a plea was inserted, to keep in mind the Sustentation Fund. It will be remembered that the original intention was to raise a capital sum by subscription, which has been done, and to add to that year by year. After the Disruption, when the Free Church of Scotland was founded, the first item of business was to start the Sustentation Fund. "The tide was taken at the flood," and a method for its collection was adopted with an enthusiasm which even to-day has not abated. No one was deemed too poor to contribute, and monthly contributions from a penny upwards were and are regularly collected. There was good cause for ministers to pray: "We bless Thee for our creation, preservation, and sustentation."

JOHN BARRON, Moderator.

"CHOOSING A MINISTER."

Sir,—I think there is no difficulty in arriving at the reason why there is a shortage of ministers. Our ministers, as well as ministers of so-called Orthodox Churches are face to face with the fact that interest in religion of any form, if not already decayed, is fast decaying. Those who are able to have motors of their own prefer to drive through the country to sitting in a church. Many educated young people are not moved by appeals of any form of spiritual things. The sporting element also robs the churches, and takes to tennis, golf and other games on a Sunday the people who in past days used to attend religious services. Where there are any specially augmented attendance is it of Unitarians? Or are those persons genuinely interested in religion in particular.

Then, prior to the Great War, the salaries of our ministers, though smaller than they now are, were of more value than are the present payments by 25 per cent. or 33 1-3 per cent. If our Churches, as organisations, are to succeed, others must make sacrifices as well as the minister and his wife, and at present they are not doing so to the extent needed. A so-called "sacrifice" is no sacrifice unless he who makes it feels the loss. In the majority of our Churches the Minister and his wife are by far the largest stipend payers or subscribers, though their names may not appear on any stipend or subscription list.

If it is said (in the words of the Rev. C. J. Street) that "apparently as much as can be afforded" is contributed, I would remark that often when so little "can be afforded" for the Church there might be less paid for outside so-called charities, which charities often do more harm than good.

Any young man suited for the Ministry in our Liberal Churches can see full well that to enter our ministry means celibacy for him, or that he is to invite one he loves to make inordinate sacrifices, to be followed by serious discouragement in other ways. Where, then, is there any room for the essential enthusiasm without which the spirit of any congregation cannot be fired?

ALEX. OSBORNE ASHWORTH.

Bloomfield, Co. Down.

(Omitted from previous issue for pressure of space).

YORK STREET CONGREGATION.
(By the Moderator).

The Moderator visited York Street on Sunday night, Jan. 11th, and was grateful at receiving a very warm welcome from minister and people, and realised that he was present in a living and hearty congregation. It is decidedly a congregation which has developed on its own unique lines, and has its own individuality. It has made itself a channel for "the life that makes all things new," has not been a copyist, but has simply gone forward in the strength of love and brotherhood. At the present moment its membership totals 350, and frequently the building is crowded out, the authorities requiring a notice to be displayed: "Church Full." So far as total attendances in the course of the year are concerned, it heads the churches of the denomination in the three kingdoms, numbering over 20,000. The Rev. A. L. Agnew, B.A., the minister, retains good health, notwithstanding his recent very severe illness, and an invitation, which to him was unexpected, has come from Boston, U.S.A., to preach the anniversary sermons in the leading Unitarian Church of that city, to which Mr. Agnew has consented. He is the first minister in Ireland to receive such an invitation, and both congregation and minister are to be congratulated on the honour.

— The Unitarian and —

Free Christian Laymen's League.

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meets in the CENTRAL HALL, ROSEMARY STREET, at 8 p.m., Third Thursday of the month, October to May, inclusive.

OBJECTS (inter alia).

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To form a bond of union and closer co-operation between the members of the various congregations.

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